

**Announcement of a New University in Kamloops for the Thompson-Cariboo  
Premier Gordon Campbell  
March 19, 2004**

*Check Against Delivery*

A lot has happened since a group of community leaders got together to launch Cariboo College 34 years ago.

In 1970, the population of Kamloops was 26,000. It's since tripled to over 80,000.

Today, your community is B.C.'s third-largest city outside the Lower Mainland. You're a leader in forestry, in technology, in telecommunications, in transportation, in tourism and in sports development. This is a community on the move.

In 1970, your local MLA was Flying Phil Gaglardi. Today, you've still got interesting MLAs. Claude Richmond has been doing an exceptional job as Speaker in the House – but he hasn't forgotten that, whether you're the Speaker or the Premier, you're an MLA first. Claude has always spoken strongly on behalf of the community, and most importantly, he's looked for practical ways to deliver on the community's dreams.

Kamloops-North Thompson MLA Kevin Krueger has been an incredibly strong advocate for this community. He's advocated on your behalf – whether it was for psych units, for highway improvements or for a new and expanded role for the University College of the Cariboo. I can tell you there is no louder voice or stronger voice on behalf of Kamloops than Kevin Krueger's.

Today's announcement will reach beyond Kamloops, and as a reflection of that, I'm very pleased three more of our MLA colleagues are here today.

Dave Chutter has joined us from Yale-Lillooet. Dave has been very active in a range of activities in the legislature, and this announcement will touch his constituency.

Walt Cobb is here from Cariboo South. Walt is a former mayor of Williams Lake, has been a strong advocate for the Williams Lake campus of UCC and recognizes the importance of what UCC delivers to the people he serves.

George Abbott is Minister of Sustainable Resource Management and MLA for Shuswap. George has taken on his responsibilities with real passion.

Also with us today is our Minister of Advanced Education, Shirley Bond. She has taken on the most significant expansion of advanced education opportunities in the province in the last 40 years. She's done that by listening to people, by working with people and by recognizing that they have a vision for their community's growth and success. Shirley's leadership has been critical in bringing us to this opportunity today.

Your city has been expanding. Your opportunities are growing. People look to Kamloops as a leader in a whole range of activities.

Over the last couple of years, we've made many investments across B.C. with direct impacts in Kamloops – new psych units, transportation investments, new tele-imaging investments in Royal Inland Hospital. Today, I'm proud to say that because of the work of your community leaders, we're making another enhancement.

Before I explain exactly what we're going to do, I want to thank Al McNair, Bob Ryan, Anthony Muzzillo and Brian Ross, who started the Friends of UCC university society. I would be remiss if I didn't also thank UCC chair Ron Olynyk and his exceptional board their work envisioning a future for the University College of the Cariboo.

The leadership of your president and executive has also taken UCC forward. I want to thank UCC president Roger Barnsley for his vision. If you want to see someone who's excited and passionate about what they do, and who can't stop talking about what they do, take a tour of this campus with Roger.

Today, I'm pleased to announce a brand-new university for Kamloops and the Thompson-Cariboo, starting in 2005. We're going to bring the excellent programs and faculty here at UCC together with B.C.'s Open University to form a new special-purpose university, right here on this campus, to reach out to people all across the province.

In the next three years, this will mean 3,000 additional spaces in the Thompson-Cariboo area – a 50 per cent increase from today. Twenty-two hundred of those spaces will come from the Open University; another 800 spaces will be added to the current spaces here at UCC.

We'll be investing \$32 million in capital improvements to support the expansion. Twenty million dollars will construct new buildings on the Kamloops campus.

We're also going to keep the college-track programs here, because they're exceptionally important to the long-term economic strength of our province and to providing students with the tools they need to pursue their goals.

College-track programs will continue at the training centre in 100 Mile House and five regional centres, in Ashcroft, Barriere, Clearwater, Chase and Lillooet. Those will provide new ladder opportunities for people across this region.

Think about what this means for young people in this region. Students who would otherwise have had to move to Prince George or the Lower Mainland will be able to study at home. They can now study where they live, and that's a huge financial benefit to them.

It's estimated to cost about \$6,000 a year for young people to have to move to another part of the province to get their education. That means that, over a four-year degree, we'll help save you \$24,000.

There will also be a new regional campus for the university in Williams Lake. It's going to be built in the former Anne Stevenson Secondary School, which will be renovated and expanded to accommodate improved programs in academics, trades, technology and applied training.

Provincial funding for UCC will be increased by over \$15 million by 2010, including \$10 million from the existing budget of Open University and \$5.5 million in new operating funding.

We're transforming this great institution in Kamloops into a great institution of excellence for open learning. UCC has already developed strong distance-learning programs in health, business, licensed practical nursing, medical lab training and applied business technology. We're going to build on Open University's 25 years of experience here in Kamloops, where we can reach out to people all over British Columbia and provide them with the tools they need to learn.

By 2006, because of the initiatives the government has taken, 173 communities across this province will have high-speed, broadband Internet access. That means that, in two years' time, people in every community in B.C. will be able to plug into your university and get the academic and trades training they need to build the life they want.

This university is going to transform Kamloops into a provincial centre of excellence for First Nations studies. Today, 700 First Nations students are involved in diploma and degree programs related to aboriginal studies.

The aboriginal cultural centre that was opened here last October is an important centre for learning and understanding. We want to celebrate and build on that. There'll be new programs for a B.A. in aboriginal studies, a certificate in aboriginal tourism, and new opportunities to advance aboriginal health – like the new aboriginal nursing program that was launched in December to improve recruitment of aboriginal students into nursing.

We can build on the excitement of First Nations young people about their futures. That only happens with reliable leadership in your institution, and I know we can count on this institution and its leadership.

Today's investment in learning goes far beyond the balance books. It goes into British Columbians' quality of life. It shows people what they can do and gives them the tools they need to pursue their dreams. It says to people in Kamloops and the Cariboo-Thompson region: we look to you for leadership. We look to you to help build a New Era of hope and opportunity.

Today is the great announcement, but this afternoon the hard work begins – to ensure we deliver on the promise you have in this region and with this institution.

We want you to have a role in shaping this new university, starting with its name. So I'd like to ask all the members of the community to think of what you would like to call your new university.

You can send them your ideas to [uccinfo@cariboo.bc.ca](mailto:uccinfo@cariboo.bc.ca). UCC will gather your ideas and submit their top choices to the government in August.

We expect to announce the new name in the fall. And in 2005, we'll open a brand-new university, right here in Kamloops, for the people of this region and the province of British Columbia to build the futures of their dreams.